

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Senior Mobility Toolkit

Final Report

September 2003



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Metropolitan Transportation Commission
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Chapter 1. Introduction and Background

This *Senior Mobility Toolkit* is an outgrowth of the *Older Adults Transportation Study* (OATS) completed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in December 2002. OATS identified ways to help maintain and improve the mobility of older adults in the San Francisco Bay Area. The OATS report included a Regional Mobility Strategy with numerous actions to benefit senior mobility. While some of these actions could be carried out by MTC, many of them required action by transit agencies, cities, counties, community organizations, advocacy organizations, and state and federal agencies.

In order to support and advance efforts by these other entities, OATS recommended that MTC should publish a toolkit with information about successful efforts to promote senior mobility with examples from the Bay Area and elsewhere. The toolkit would focus on efforts that can be implemented by local agencies and organizations in the Bay Area.

The examples provided in the toolkit are intended to provide ideas that local agencies can adapt to local circumstances, and information that advocacy organizations and local elected officials can use to promote new initiatives. In order to help with this process, contacts are provided for as many of the examples as possible. Numerous links to resources on the world wide web are also provided.

Expected rapid growth in the older population presents a major challenge for maintaining personal mobility. Not only is the size of the senior population expected to grow rapidly, the most rapid growth is expected to occur in the oldest age groups which have the most severe mobility problems. Further, research for OATS showed that much of the growth will occur in places that are poorly served by public transportation. In times of budget problems, public transportation is being cut back. Even in places where transit service is good, many seniors do not use it because they have little familiarity with transit and are used to relying on personal automobiles as the most convenient mode of travel. As a result, there are likely to be more and more older adults who find themselves unable to travel by their accustomed methods, for whom alternative means of travel are either unfamiliar or unavailable.

These trends require collaborative effort by all levels of government, public agencies, and community organizations. Steps are needed to enable older people to drive safely as long as possible, and to provide real alternatives to

Cover Photos:
George Draper (top
and right), Jack
Champlin (left)

driving for older people who do not wish to drive, cannot afford to drive, or can no longer drive for reasons related to aging.

Conventional public transportation is a cost-effective and useful option for many older people. Helping older people use transit must be one part of a strategy to preserve mobility. However, transit is mainly limited to places where concentrations of people and destinations make it cost-effective. Paratransit provided by transit operators as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act serves many older people who cannot use conventional transit. However, these services are mostly limited to the same areas as transit. Many older people cannot use ADA paratransit for their needs because they need more assistance than these services can provide, they cannot afford the fares, or they are not able to work within the system of telephone reservations used in ADA paratransit services. Given the expense of providing ADA paratransit, these limitations are likely to remain.

Filling the gaps left by conventional transit and paratransit will require creative, flexible, and highly varied responses.

In many cases, cities, counties, and community organizations are already stepping in to provide services that meet these challenges. Examples of such efforts are the basis of this toolkit. It is hoped that these examples will serve as an inspiration for others to create similar creative efforts in their own communities.

Chapter 2. Pedestrian Safety



George Draper

Walking (including travel by wheelchair) is one of the most important ways that seniors travel, especially for short trips in urban areas. In the Bay Area, 12.5% of all trips by people age 65 and older are made by walking.¹ Safe walking routes in neighborhoods enable people to reach transit stops and can make it possible for people to reach local businesses without using a car. In commercial areas and business districts, safe walking routes are necessary to be able to reach destinations independently from transit stops and from parking areas.

Pedestrian safety is especially important for older people. People age 65 and older have the highest traffic-related pedestrian death rates of any age group in California. In 2000, older adults represented 40% of all pedestrians killed and 12% of those injured in traffic crashes.² Many communities have begun initiatives to promote a safe walking environment for all people, including older people. Portland, Oregon, and Oakland, California, are examples of cities that have conducted comprehensive pedestrian planning process. In San Francisco, community advocacy has been a focus of pedestrian safety efforts.

MTC Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Toolbox

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is in the process of developing an on-line *Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Toolbox* to increase public agency awareness of the tools that are available to them. The toolbox will include: information on the risks of traveling to pedestrians and bicyclists; a description of a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to pedestrian and bicyclist safety; descriptions and illustrations of over 80 site-specific and programmatic tools to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety; information on funding opportunities; and select success stories from the Bay Area and beyond. Some of the tools of particular interest for older people are pedestrian signal countdown timers, longer WALK phases at traffic signals, community education, audible pedestrian signals, automated pedestrian

¹ 1990 MTC Travel Survey (presentation by Chuck Purvis at the Mobility Matters Conference).

² California Task Force on Older Adults and Traffic Safety, *Traffic Safety Among Older Adults: Recommendations for California*, Center for Injury Prevention Policy and Practice, San Diego State University (no date).

detection, pedestrian signals that confirm activation, and brochures explaining the use of pedestrian signals. For each tool, information is provided about advantages and disadvantages, costs, locations where it has been tried, and contacts to obtain more information.

Web Resource

The toolbox will be a living document that will be updated periodically as new information and technologies become available. MTC expects to launch the initial version of the toolbox, which will be accessible through MTC's web page at www.mtc.ca.gov, by October 2003.

Pedestrian Planning in Portland, Oregon

The most basic changes needed to enable older people to walk in their neighborhoods are the same ones that will help everyone. The Portland, Oregon, region has been particularly active in promoting walking as the preferred mode of transportation for short trips. In 1998, the City completed work on a *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan*. The Plan establishes a 20-year framework for improvements that will enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation. The plan includes pedestrian policies, pedestrian street classifications, pedestrian design guidelines, a list of capital projects, and a set of recommended funding strategies. The *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide* that was produced in conjunction with the plan is officially issued by the City Engineer. Every project that is designed and built in the City of Portland should conform to these guidelines.

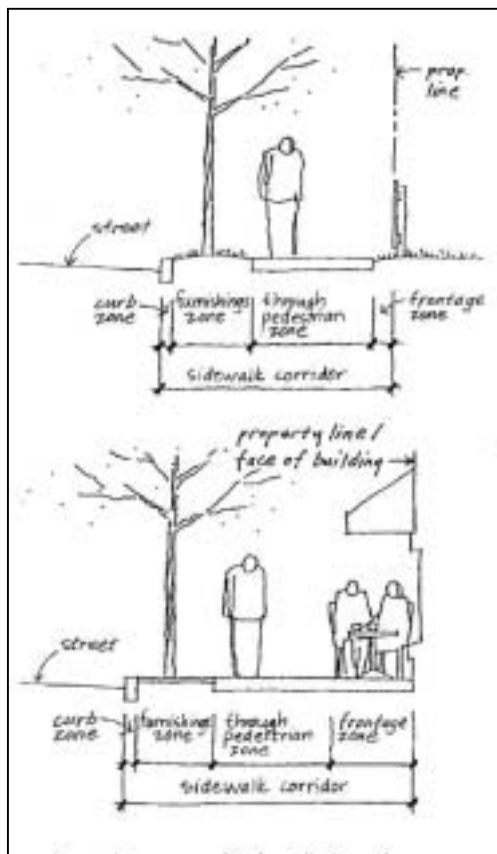
In the planning process, the City had to deal with the fact that many areas of City largely lacked pedestrian facilities, even on arterial streets. This situation resulted from the fact that, in the last several decades, the City had annexed many neighborhoods where streets were not built to urban standards. The plan relied on research showing that simply adding sidewalks in these areas would not create walkable communities.³ The research identified four Pedestrian Environmental Factors needed to increase pedestrian modal share: ease of street crossings, sidewalk continuity, street connectivity, and topography.

While the *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide* does not address the last two items, it does address the first two in great detail. (Other planning

³ *Making the Land Use Transportation Air Quality Connection*, Volume 4A, "The Pedestrian Environment," Parsons Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas, inc. with Cambridge Systematics, Inc. and Calthorpe Associates, December 1993.

documents do address the issue of street connectivity.) The Guide is clearly written with useful illustrations. In addition to specifying how projects should be built, it explains the importance of its recommendations. Notably, the Guide specifies that sidewalk improvements be provided on both sides on all new public streets, in conjunction with improvements to most existing streets, and, to the extent practicable, as part of all new infill building development on existing streets. Exceptions can be considered, such as providing sidewalks on one side of the street where there are severe topographic or natural resource constraints or on certain short cul-de-sacs.

City development review and transportation staff apply these guidelines as part of the development review process. Even a significant home remodel can trigger review of the street frontage, resulting in a requirement for sidewalk construction. In some cases, this can result in isolated sidewalk segments, but staff regard this as a 100-year investment.



Typical sections of sidewalk corridor in a residential zone (top) and commercial zone (bottom).
(Portland Pedestrian Design Guide)

The Guide includes detailed recommendations for sidewalks, covering topics such as the required width of a "through pedestrian zone" (exclusive of signs and furnishings that are encouraged next to the curb and next to buildings), maximum grades, using curbs to delineate the pedestrian zone, providing street trees, treatment of driveways, and many other topics. The Guide provides similarly detailed recommendations for crosswalks and street corners, including traffic signals.

The *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan* included a process for prioritizing pedestrian improvements over the next twenty years. To do this two tools were developed: 1) a Pedestrian Potential Index that measures the strength of environmental factors that favor walking; and 2) a Deficiency Index that measures how critically improvements are needed. The Pedestrian Potential Index includes factors such as: location within a designated pedestrian district; proximity to destinations such as schools, parks, transit, and neighborhood shopping; and mixed land uses. The Deficiency Index includes missing sidewalks, difficult and dangerous street crossings, and lack of a connected street network. Projects that have a high pedestrian potential and a high deficiency were assigned the highest priority.

The process for the *Portland Pedestrian Master Plan*

did not explicitly consider the needs of seniors. However, the *Pedestrian Design Guide* does include very detailed specifications for curb ramps and recommends some increase in pedestrian crossing intervals for pedestrians with disabilities. More generally, the entire process is intended to promote walking as a mode for everybody. Staff are aware of the *Guidelines for Older Drivers and Pedestrians* published by the Federal Highway Administration and will probably incorporate them in the next revision of the *Pedestrian Design Guide*.

As implemented, Portland's pedestrian planning process has resulted in a very responsive system for pedestrian needs of all types. A full-time Pedestrian Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the work of City engineering and planning staff on pedestrian issues, including extensive staff outreach and training. Individuals can report unsafe conditions and request improvements through a variety of avenues, by calling a Transportation Safety and Livability Hotline, calling the Pedestrian Coordinator, or by calling the responsible departments, including the Signals Division, directly. The Pedestrian Coordinator cites as an example of responsiveness installing a microwave detector that extends the walk signal if pedestrians are present in the crosswalk near a Salvation Army center that has a senior lunch program and a bus stop across the street. In addition, despite budget cuts, the City maintains a neighborhood traffic calming coordinator.

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Web Resources

Portland's pedestrian program is described at <http://www.pdxtrans.org/Pedestrians/default.htm>. This page has links to the Pedestrian Master Plan, The Pedestrian Design Guide, and many other useful resources.

Portland's traffic calming program is described at <http://www.pdxtrans.org/Trafficcalming/default.htm>. This page includes links to policies and procedures for requesting and financial neighborhood traffic calming in

Portland` neighborhoods, evaluations of individual traffic calming projects, and technical material on traffic calming methods.

Community Organizing in San Francisco



George Draper

In San Francisco, efforts to improve pedestrian safety for older people and others have involved community organizations, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Parking and Traffic (DPT). San Francisco community-based organizations have a long history of effective advocacy for pedestrian and other issues. During 2001 through 2003, several San Francisco community-based organizations were aided in their pedestrian safety efforts by “mini-grants”

provided by DPH under its Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Project using grants from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). DPH views pedestrian safety as a public health issue, and its approach to health education campaigns (such as past violence and tobacco use prevention campaigns) matches OTS’ approach to traffic safety through public awareness, education, and coalition building.* According to DPH staff, community-based advocacy has proved to be a very effective mechanism to help the City prioritize improvements that help seniors and others.

In 2002 and 2003, DPH awarded mini-grants to 19 community-based organizations to improve pedestrian and traffic safety among children, a variety of immigrant groups, bicyclists, and minority communities. Awardees that specifically address issues of older people are Senior Action Network (SAN), Walk San Francisco, Self-Help for the Elderly (SHE), and Network for Elders. These groups together and independently work to encourage the City to prioritize changes that improve pedestrian conditions for seniors, especially improvements to pedestrian crossings. All of them maintain a variety of effective programs independently of the DPH mini-grants. In response to the work of the community organizations, DPT has made numerous improvements at intersections and incorporates seniors’ concerns in the way it designs pedestrian crossings. The following

* OTS grants are awarded in nine priority areas, of which pedestrian and bicycle safety is one. Currently the program is targeting other topics.

paragraphs provide more detail on the activities of SAN, Walk San Francisco, SHE, and the Network for Elders.

Senior Action Network (SAN) is one of the most effective advocacy organizations in San Francisco for pedestrian issues. SAN is a citywide federation of senior organizations organizing to improve the lives of San Francisco's seniors. Its mission is to empower seniors to influence public policy. Among its successful efforts, some of which involved support through DPH mini-grants, SAN claims the following:



Senior Action Network

- Creating a list of the "Terrible Two Dozen Intersections" which they lobby the City to improve. SAN created this list through a combination of outreach to seniors, evaluation of the Muni bus network and collision statistics.
- Lobbying the City to place "no right turn on red" signs throughout San Francisco.
- Advocating for the City to install some of the first countdown pedestrian signals at Market and Van Ness, where two of the city's biggest streets cross near the Civic Center.
- Influencing DPT to apply objectives for longer pedestrian crossing times at signalized intersections, including those with countdown pedestrian signals.
- Advocating for the construction of a large pedestrian island at Market and Embarcadero on the edge of the Financial District.
- Accelerating the schedule for major improvements to the intersection of Arleta and Bayshore. The City has installed pedestrian signage, slowed the pedestrian light cycle, and removed a sign that was blocking the pedestrian crossing area.

Walk San Francisco won a DPH mini-grant to organize residents, business interests, and visitors of the South of Market (SOMA) District to identify, prioritize, and implement cost-effective pedestrian safety improvements to intersections in the neighborhood. Walk SF is a pedestrian advocacy group that promotes walking as a safe and sustainable mode of transportation to increase the city's livability, enhance public life, and improve public and environmental health. The SOMA area has long blocks, wide streets carrying high volumes of traffic, and inconsistent crossing facilities, making it

a less than ideal environment for pedestrians. However, the area has several senior residences and facilities for seniors. It is just south of downtown and the site of rapid development in recent years that has produced high volumes of pedestrians. The study resulted in a list of recommended low-cost improvements. Many of them are being implemented including:

- A pedestrian countdown signal at Eighth and Howard
- Replacement of existing senior crossing signs with brighter fluorescent yellow-green ones at two intersections
- Added school crossing pavement and legends at appropriate locations
- Radar speed display signs (contingent on federal funding) at appropriate locations
- Pedestrian head start signal timing at Sixth and Howard
- Red light camera enforcement at Fourth and Folsom and Fourth and Howard
- A widened sidewalk on Sixth from Harrison to Market

With the help of a DPH mini-grant, *Self-Help for the Elderly* (SHE) conducted pedestrian safety education to monolingual Chinese seniors living in Chinatown. Independent of their DPH mini-grant, SHE also successfully advocated for a “Senior Crossing” sign at the intersection at Thirtieth Avenue and Judah Street in San Francisco’s Outer Sunset District. The area is characterized by wide streets and single-family attached houses with garages. This portion of Judah is a neighborhood commercial district with a

lot of through traffic and one of the City’s light rail lines. SHE is a private non-profit community-based service organization that serves over 15,000 seniors annually in San Francisco with home care, social services, adult day care, and other services.



Senior Action Network

The Network for Elders (Network) received a DPH mini-grant to create materials and conduct workshops on pedestrian safety in Bayview/Hunter’s Point. The final result of the project was a prioritized list of

community recommendations to improve pedestrian safety along the Third Street corridor, which were distributed to the appropriate City agencies and elected officials. Third Street is a major traffic artery connecting Bayshore and Downtown. The Bayshore corridor has one of the highest concentration

of African American residents in San Francisco. High levels of poverty and joblessness also characterize the corridor. The program identified Third and Palou as an important intersection for improvements due to unsafe conditions and a critical role in the pedestrian network. Indicating a mixed reaction to this effort, the City has prioritized improvements to that intersection to be completed in the next couple years. The Network, a neighborhood non-profit agency, provides educational, social, volunteer, and individualized case management services for Bayview Hunters Point elders and their families.

Using a 2001 mini-grant, the Chinatown Community Development Center advocated for the pedestrian scrambles all along Stockton Street, one of the main routes through Chinatown. The group also conducted education regarding the pedestrian scrambles to monolingual Chinese immigrants, particularly seniors.

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Web Resources

Senior Action Network's web site at <http://www.senioractionnetwork.org/> includes a description of SAN's pedestrian advocacy efforts as well as other programs to benefit older people, and links to a variety of useful resources.

Oakland Pedestrian Master Plan

The Oakland City Council adopted the Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) as part of the Land Use and Transportation Element of the City's General Plan in November 2002. The Plan aims to improve pedestrian conditions in the city of Oakland. It includes a summary of existing conditions including a collision analysis, establishment of a pedestrian route network, policy recommendations, engineering design elements and an implementation plan. In the formation of the plan, the Oakland Pedestrian Safety Project (OPSP) conducted extensive outreach including consultation with older adults. The Plan includes a number of components that show its consideration of older people who walk.

The PMP outreach included a wide spectrum of opportunities for seniors to provide input. Outreach was conducted through neighborhood associations and crime prevention councils (with the Oakland Police Department), which often take place in retirement homes and senior community centers and have a high attendance of older adults. In addition, community-based organizations for seniors, such as United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County and Asian Health Service, were involved in the outreach efforts. As a result the plan had a high level of input from Oakland's older population.

One element of the existing conditions chapter is an analysis of collision patterns including senior pedestrian collisions. The plan identifies the top ten intersections for senior pedestrian collisions relative to the location of senior centers. The analysis found that four of the top ten intersections had traffic signals and six were within one-quarter mile of a senior center. In addition, seniors suffer the highest rates of pedestrian fatalities (24% of fatal pedestrian/motor vehicle collisions and 10.5% of Oakland's population). Older adults are also most likely to be hit in crosswalks.

When formulating the PMP's recommendations, its authors used the "universal design" approach. This means that they chose designs for the most vulnerable populations with the expectation that everyone's needs would be served. One of the most significant issues for senior pedestrians is crossing light times. Oakland's PMP includes a section on crossing

treatments, which suggests a variety of treatments that can be used at intersections where pedestrian safety is a concern. These treatments include high-visibility ladder striping and distinctive paving of crosswalks, longer pedestrian crossing times, leading pedestrian intervals, scramble and countdown pedestrian signals, and audible signals.

The implementation of the PMP is a project in itself. United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County will manage the community organizing aspect of the implementation of the plan. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded United Seniors \$33,000 for the 18-month community-organizing process. This process will involve identifying pedestrian safety hotspots, educating older adults on the benefits of walking, identifying and attempting to address barriers to walking (like crossing time and the need for benches to rest along the way), a walking audit of neighborhoods with a high concentration of seniors, and holding politicians, engineers, planners, and public safety officials accountable for pedestrian conditions. This process involves a series of workshops and roadshows and will end in June 2004.

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Web Resources

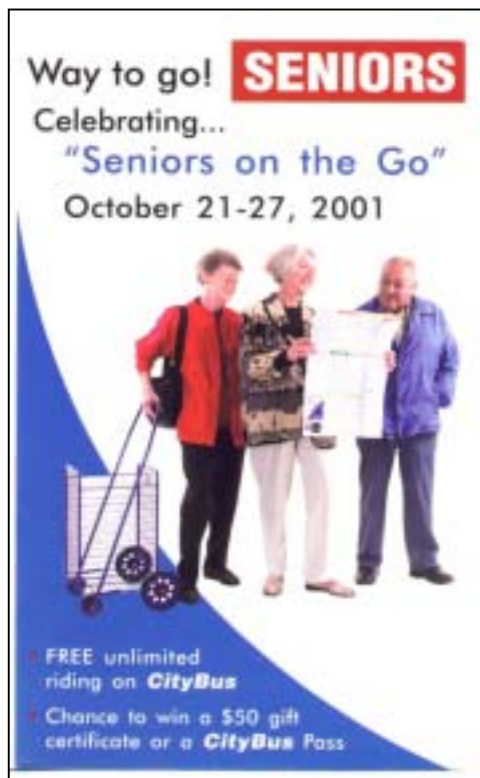
The complete Oakland Pedestrian Master Plan (Final Draft August 16, 2002) can be found at <http://www.oaklandnet.com/government/traffic-safety-grant.html>.

Chapter 3. Helping Seniors Become Comfortable Using Transit

Most older people who need to begin curtailing their driving have little experience using public transportation. Since they have grown up driving they may know very little about transit options where they live and may not realize that they could use it for many of their needs. A number of communities have created programs to familiarize older people with transit service using measures such as field trips, bus buddies and escorts, and joint promotions with merchants.

Santa Rosa Seniors on the Go

The City of Santa Rosa has developed a very successful senior marketing campaign called "Seniors on the Go" for its *CityBus* fixed route transit system. "Seniors on the Go" was first introduced in October, 2001, and is projected to continue as an annual *CityBus* promotion in the future. For a



period of one week every October, all seniors age 65 years and older enjoy unlimited free access to all *CityBus* routes by showing a "Seniors on the Go" pass. The passes are available at numerous outlets around Santa Rosa, distributed by the City's campaign partners and mailed to all senior residences and complexes.

Seniors are encouraged to turn in their free pass with a *CityBus* transfer issued to them during the week of the promotion in order to be eligible to win one of twenty \$50 gift certificates from a local grocery store or one of ten *CityBus* passes good for the month of their choice. The program is specifically intended to take advantage of available capacity on the transit system during midday hours. "Riding Tips" in the brochure to which the passes are attached encourage seniors to ride between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to avoid the work and school rush. In the first year of the program, senior and disabled ridership during the week of the promotion was 60% higher than the same week the previous year.

Partners for the campaign in 2002 included the Council on Aging, the Senior Center, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging, Oakmont Village Association (a retirement community), Kaiser Permanente, South West Community Health Center, AARP, and the KBBF public radio station. These partners publicized the program in their newsletters and provided mailing lists. The partnership has helped *CityBus* establish coalitions with senior organizations to support other initiatives to build ridership by seniors and build support for transit. The City also has a Bus Buddy program that provides personalized bus training for seniors. The Bus Buddy program is promoted as part of Seniors on the Go and throughout the year.

Santa Rosa's Seniors on the Go campaign is modeled after a similar campaign implemented by the Metropolitan Transit Development Board in San Diego which has since been discontinued.

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Napa Transit Ambassadors

In Napa County, the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency (NCTPA) coordinates a Transit Ambassador program that offers personalized orientation for new users of public transit in Napa County. Trained volunteers assist new riders in learning how to read schedules, how to plan a trip, where to catch the bus, how to use transfers, how to pay the fare, how to use passes, and how special features, such as the wheelchair lift and "kneeler" work.

The program is based on the idea that, many times, the reason people don't try to ride the bus is because they



are afraid that they will get lost, take the wrong bus, or not know what to do once they are on the bus. They may find the schedule confusing and are afraid to ask questions or do not know what questions to ask. The Ambassador can help alleviate some of these fears by being a "travel

buddy.” The Ambassadors are all bus riders themselves, and many of them have disabilities of one kind or another.

The Ambassadors provide several kinds of assistance. In many cases an ambassador provides one-on-one help to new transit riders. This assistance is offered to anyone who has never ridden the bus or who has had an unpleasant initial experience on the bus. Senior citizens, youth and people with disabilities are encouraged to take advantage of the program. The Ambassador will bring schedules and information about the bus and help plan a trip. Then the Ambassador will accompany the new rider on a bus trip, demonstrating features of the bus. The Ambassador will repeat the process until the trainee feels comfortable about their ability to ride the bus alone.

The Ambassadors also help out at the downtown transit center and provide assistance to other riders on board the buses. If there is a service change, the Ambassadors help explain the service changes to other riders.

New riders who need help learning to use transit are assessed for their suitability for the Transit Ambassador program through a phone or personal interview. People with severe cognitive or developmental disabilities may need more intensive training than the volunteer Ambassadors can provide.

As of mid-2003 there were 13 Transit Ambassadors, almost twice as many as the previous year. Ambassadors were recruited through social service agencies, by advertising on the buses, and by word of mouth. In seeking new Ambassadors, it is considered essential that candidates be “true bus riders” who know the system and will be enthusiastic about helping people learn to use it. Candidates fill out an application and are interviewed. Those who may not have the temperament to act as one-on-one travel buddies may still be selected to help out at the Transit Center.

Prospective Ambassadors receive four hours of classroom training. They receive a loose leaf binder with information about all of NCTPA’s programs. The binders are kept updated as service and policies change. The Ambassadors also receive vests, tee shirts, and pouches, all bearing the “Transit Ambassador” logo, which they wear while helping new riders or just while riding the bus. They also receive a free bus pass to use whether they are working or not. Each new volunteer agrees to spend at least eight hours per month as an Ambassador, including time spent helping out at the transit center, riding the bus, and providing one-on-one assistance. The Ambassadors meet six times a year including a Christmas luncheon and a summer picnic.

The budgeted cost of the program is minimal. In an average year, the special outings and supplies for the program including give-aways and thank you gifts cost approximately \$600 - \$800 for all 13 Ambassadors. In addition, NCTPA estimates a cost of about \$7,100 per year in staff time coordinating the program. NCTPA does not keep formal statistics about numbers of people who have been assisted by the Transit Ambassadors. However, each Ambassador strives toward training eight new riders per year. The agency considers the program a valuable way to help orient new riders, and also a good way to involve the community.

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Web Resources

Information about the Transit Ambassador program is available at <http://www.nctpa.net/vine/ambass.html>.

Chapter 4. Local Shuttles and Circulators

Many cities have introduced local shuttle routes that supplement the regional services operated by transit agencies. The shuttles commonly use small vehicles, operate on neighborhood streets, and link up local destinations of interest to seniors, youth, and commuters needing access to and from rail stations. Among the Bay Area cities that currently operate local shuttles are Burlingame, Emeryville, Foster City, Menlo Park, Novato, Oakland, Palo Alto, and San Carlos. A particularly attractive feature of shuttles is their ability to serve several kinds of trips and groups.

West Oakland Senior Shuttle

The West Oakland Senior Shuttle connects 14 senior housing complexes to food shopping and senior center meal programs. The shuttle is operated by Bay Area Community Services (BACS) using funding from the 7th Street/McClymonds Neighborhood Improvement Initiative, which is supported with grants from the Hewlett Foundation, and a portion of the City of Oakland's share of the countywide Measure B sales tax devoted to transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. The Transportation

Committee of the Mayor's Commission on Aging has been instrumental in obtaining funding and conducting outreach among residents of the senior the shuttle.



George Draper

West Oakland is a low-income neighborhood with a predominantly minority population located immediately west and north of downtown Oakland. The area was formerly bisected by the so-called Cypress Structure of the Nimitz Freeway, which collapsed in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Since the earthquake, the

freeway has been rebuilt to skirt most of the residential area of West Oakland. The City has attempted to get a grocery store to locate in West Oakland, but so far there are very limited food shopping opportunities within the neighborhood.

The shuttle picks up residents from the senior complexes and takes them to lunch at the West Oakland Senior center and to a variety of food shopping

opportunities in other neighborhoods chosen by the seniors. There is a sign up list at each of the housing complexes. The residents are encouraged to sign up for the shuttle in advance, although they can ride without signing up if there is space available. The Shuttle operates between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. four days a week. Three or four of the 14 senior residences are served each day. The same 18-passenger van is used before and after the shuttle routes to carry clients to and from several adult day health centers. On average the shuttle provides about 800 trips to riders each month. One of the most distinctive features of the West Oakland Senior Shuttle is that an attendant rides every trip, assisting the riders with their packages and getting on and off the vehicles.

The shuttle began operating in March 2002 as a pilot project, but the riders who use it now regard it as a necessity of life. Funding is assured at least through June 2004. The City is interested in expanding the shuttle concept to other neighborhoods and is working to identify funding.

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San Carlos SCOOT

In November 2002 the City of San Carlos initiated a pilot shuttle program that provided three distinct kinds of service tailored to the needs of commuters, children, and seniors. With participation by San Carlos Youth, the Shuttle was named SCOOT (San Carlos Optimal Operational Transit). In the course of each day, the five vehicles switch between services.



Kimberly Harbert

- In the peak hours, the buses take commuters between the CalTrain commuter rail station and their homes or offices based on prior reservations.
- Immediately after the commute times, four buses operate on fixed routes bringing children to one elementary school and one middle school. A fifth bus makes three trips from the middle school to a youth center.
- During the midday, and in conjunction with the afternoon commute time, the buses provide demand response “community shuttle” service for seniors operating between homes and downtown destinations, including the library (adjacent to City Hall) and the senior center.

San Carlos SCOOT Daily Schedule

6:00 AM – 7:10 AM	Commuter Shuttle
7:15 AM – 8:30 AM	Youth Routes
8:30 AM – 2:15 PM	Community Shuttle
2:15 PM – 3:30 PM	Youth Routes
3:30 PM – 6:30 PM	Commuter/Community Shuttle

After six months, the shuttles were carrying about 1,800 trips per week, of which about 70% was carried by the youth routes, 10% by the demand responsive commuter shuttle, and 20% by the demand responsive community shuttle for seniors. A modified schedule will be used during the summer.

The pilot program was funded with a \$137,000 grant from the local congestion management agency and funds from a countywide transportation sales tax. The 2002-03 pilot expanded on a pilot the previous year that served primarily seniors. While senior mobility is an important objective, the City's primary goals were to reduce congestion and contribute to air pollution reduction. The City claims a significant reduction in congestion levels around the middle school served by the shuttles. As further evidence of effectiveness, the youth center has experienced enough additional demand that it has extended its hours. The City also hopes to avoid needing to create more parking at the Caltrain station. The City is looking for permanent funding for the shuttle.

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Web Resource

<http://www.cityofsancarlos.org>

Palo Alto Shuttle

The City of Palo Alto, in northern Santa Clara County, has been operating local shuttle service since 2000. The Palo Alto Shuttle was designed to focus on needs not served by the regional transit systems whose routes run through the city. The Shuttle was intended to serve multiple goals, of which providing mobility to seniors, people with disabilities and others with special needs was just one. The service was also intended to attract passengers who would otherwise drive cars, support economic development, and increase safety at schools.

There are three Shuttle routes. The most heavily-used route, and the one that is most used by seniors, is the Crosstown Shuttle. This route operates every half hour from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and connects residential neighborhoods, senior residences and services, schools, libraries, recreation centers, commercial districts, and the Caltrain commuter rail station. A second route operates every 15 minutes during commute hours, and connects the Caltrain station with employers and two high schools. A third route, begun in January 2003, is a cooperative venture between the City and Stanford University. This route is an extension of the University's Marguerite system that links a number of downtown Palo Alto and Stanford campus locations.

High school and middle school students account for a little over half of shuttle ridership. According to a survey conducted after the first year of operation, seniors (age 65 and older) accounted for 38% of ridership on the Crosstown route. Stops at senior residences were among the most active on the route.

In fiscal year 2002-03, the shuttles carried 155,000 passengers. Funding for the shuttles comes from City General Fund, the Palo Alto Unified School District, and the Caltrain Shuttle Program.

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Web Resource

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Chapter 5. Helping Older People Access and Use Transportation Services

Transportation services for older people (and for the general public) are provided by a wide variety of organizations with differing areas of service and differing missions. These divisions can make it hard for older people to locate appropriate services and find out how to use them, and can make travel across jurisdictional boundaries difficult. In the case of services provided by public transportation operators, this mosaic of services results from operator service areas that follow political boundaries that often have little to do with actual travel patterns. In the case of more specialized services, a variety of services is necessary to tap the resources and initiative of community organizations, to integrate services with the provision of human services, and to meet the variety of needs of older people.

This section illustrates some of the approaches being taken to make the complex collection of transportation services easier to access and use by older people and those who care for them.

Conventional Public Transportation

In the case of public transportation, operators attempt to coordinate schedules at convenient transfer points, pursue coordinated methods to provide information about services, and have developed agreements regarding payment of fares using transfers and multi-operator passes. These efforts are intended to help all transit users, not just older people. Initiatives that would help older people take advantage of these services are a promising area for future work.

In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission operates a web site with information about services and fares of all transit operators in the region. The web site includes a trip planner called "Take Transit" that provides detailed information about how to travel by public transit between any two points in the region, including transfers between multiple operators. Similar web-based multi-operator trip planners are available for the Southern California region and the San Diego region.

For people without internet access or who prefer to speak to a person on the telephone, options are more limited. In San Diego, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board has developed coordinated transit information resources

for all operators in its region. Riders can call San Diego Transit and obtain information about trips using any of the transit operators in the area. MTC is also demonstrating a regional smart card system, called Translink, that can be used on all the major transit operators in the region.

Web Resources

The San Francisco Bay Area Transit Trip Planner, "Take Transit" at <http://www.transitinfo.org> will soon be incorporated in the new web site <http://www.511.org>.

Southern California transit trip planner, "Transtar":
<http://ts.scag.ca.gov/transit2>

San Diego region transit trip planner:
<http://www.sdcommute.com>

Paratransit

Paratransit provided by transit operators as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act serves many older people who cannot use conventional transit. Since these services complement fixed-route transit, they have many of the same limitations of coverage as transit services. In most cases, paratransit services in metropolitan areas are divided by the same jurisdictional boundaries that apply to conventional transit.

The ideal arrangement for people who need paratransit service would be a unified system covering the entire region, such as exists in Los Angeles County. There, Access Services, Inc., provides ADA paratransit service on behalf of the regional transit operator (the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority) and 42 local and municipal transit operators within the county. However, Los Angeles County is part of a much larger region, and many trips within the region require transfers to other paratransit systems. In addition, older people who do not qualify for ADA paratransit need to find out about the services operated by the many local jurisdictions within the county. To help people learn about these other services, Access Services provides RIDEINFO, an operator facilitated referral service which matches an individual's transportation needs with available accessible transportation. RIDEINFO gives referrals to over 200 public and private accessible transportation providers in Los Angeles County.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, there are 24 different ADA paratransit systems sponsored by transit operators, in addition to a number of non-ADA city paratransit systems. Transfers are available between the ADA paratransit systems, and the transit operators have developed guidelines for arranging

these transfers. The operators that serve areas close to San Francisco, East Bay Paratransit Consortium (AC Transit and BART) and Golden Gate Transit, currently offer direct service into the City. This avoids the need for riders to arrange a transfer to San Francisco Paratransit. The operators have developed cost sharing agreements with San Francisco to cover the portion of these trips that exceed their mandated ADA paratransit service areas.

The transit portion of the 511.org web site with travel information for the Bay Area will include information about paratransit services throughout the region.

Specialized Services for Older People

When it comes to accessing the array of local community services operated by cities, community-based organizations, and human service agencies, the usual sources of travel information are often of limited help. Some of the steps that have been taken to help include: 1) specialized web-based information, and 2) improved telephone information and referral services.

Web-based Information in San Diego

In San Diego County, a collaborative of community and government agencies created a web-based service with information about transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities called STRIDE (Specialized Transportation Referral and Information for the Disabled and Elderly). Users can specify the origin and destination of their trips, based on cities, neighborhoods, and major facilities, and choose from a list of 23 types of service they may need, for example door-to-door service, transport to medical appointments, taxi vouchers, and wheelchair lifts. The web site will then provide information about all the services that meet the specified criteria. It is also possible to browse a list of all the more than 150 participating programs. The web site can also be used to create printed lists that can be provided to seniors who do not use the internet themselves, showing all the programs in a particular area.



STRIDE went live in July 2002 after more than a year of development effort by a collaborative including the Coordinated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), Del Mar Community Connections, North County Lifeline, Inc., Out and About Vista, and Redwood Senior Homes and Services. The County's department of Aging and Independence Services provided a grant of \$25,000 that paid for computer programming and the technical aspects of the web site development. The collaborative members contributed staff and volunteer time worth a similar amount that went into defining the functions that the site should perform and collecting the information about the transportation services included. Information from the Social Services Transportation Inventory conducted every four years by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) provided the starting point for the STRIDE database. Collaborative members then resurveyed all the listed agencies to update and complete the necessary information.

The principal users of STRIDE are social workers and other people who work with seniors, adult children of older people (especially those living outside of the San Diego area), and those older people who use computers themselves.

SANDAG, as the CTSA for the county, has assumed responsibility for maintaining the web site and plans to conduct a comprehensive update of the information every six months. Participating agencies can provide information to update their listings at any time using the Feedback link on

the web site. The members of the STRIDE collaborative would like to keep improving the web site, adding more options to it and making it easier for seniors themselves to use.

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Web Resources

The San Diego STRIDE (Specialized Transportation Referral and Information for the Disabled and Elderly) web site can be found at: <http://www.stridesd.org>.

Enhanced Information and Referral in Orange County, California

Another approach to helping older people access transportation services is to enhance the ability of information and referral staff to locate appropriate services and connect older people with them. The Orange County Office on Aging (OoA) implemented a program of this type in mid-2002. Orange County has dedicated a substantial portion of its Tobacco Settlement Revenue to creating and supporting non-emergency medical transportation services for older adults. In addition to funding several specific transportation services, the County has implemented a “one-stop” information and outreach program to inform seniors of available transportation options. Older adults can call the OoA’s information and assistance toll-free number and reach specially trained professionals who assess the caller’s transportation needs and refer them to options including:

- Services created under the County’s non-emergency medical transportation program;
- City transportation services, including many implemented through the Orange County Transportation Authority’s Senior Mobility Program;

- Any of the community-based and human service transportation programs in the county included in the annual list developed by the Transportation Committee of the Senior Citizen's Advisory Council;
- OCTA's fixed-route transit and ADA paratransit services; and
- Additional resources located by OoA staff.

Two full-time equivalent positions were added to OoA's information and assistance staffing. The staff of six now handle about 2,500 calls per month, of which about one third are about transportation. Transportation is the second most common topic of calls, exceeded only by housing. The volume of transportation calls is expected to increase as OoA conducts additional outreach.

OoA's Transportation Manager, who oversees the overall non-emergency medical transportation program, trained all six information and assistance staff people about transportation resources and issues. The training included how to determine callers' need and assess what resources are appropriate for them. As part of this effort, an updated and expanded database of transportation services was created. As a result of the enhancements to its information and assistance program, OoA is now able to provide far more customized information to callers than it did before. The representatives are able to find transportation even for many callers whose situation does not match any of the traditional transportation programs.

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Chapter 6. Private Funding

Public transportation is generally perceived as a publicly funded activity. However, many communities are using private sources of funding for senior transportation. The examples in this section describe services funded by donations, homeowner dues, merchant contributions, and foundation grants.

Novato Health Express

The Novato Health Express provides free transportation for seniors and people with disabilities to medical appointments within Novato.

Novato Community Hospital funds the program entirely through donations. The hospital, which is a community-based, not-for-profit corporation, has a volunteer Fund Development Council that reviews programs each year and decides which ones they want to fund. The council works with the hospital's Development Department to raise funds for the selected projects, which include the Health Express, a chaplaincy program, and a partnership that works with the schools to provide health care services to low income and uninsured individuals. Funds are raised through donations and events such as an annual gala and golf tournament. The hospital has funded the Novato Health Express since 1995. Transportation has consistently ranked high on people's list of priorities for community services to fund. In 2001, the hospital relocated to a less convenient site on the other side of the freeway from the town, which increased use of the Health Express.

The hospital contracts with the Marin Senior Coordinating Council and its Whistlestop Wheels transportation program to operate the Health Express. Whistlestop Wheels is the principal provider of paratransit services in Marin County, including ADA paratransit service, which it provides under contract to the Marin County Transit District. Whistlestop Wheels runs a dedicated phone line for the Health Express and operates a van with the program's name and logo on it. Sutter Health pays for the program by the hour with an annual budget of \$32,500.

Passengers can make a reservation one to seven days in advance. Ride scheduling and rides themselves are available only during daytime hours (8 or 8:30 AM to 5 PM). The Novato Health Express runs from 9 AM to noon each morning and as needed in the afternoon based on passenger reservations. In the first eight months of fiscal year 2002-03, the Novato Health Express provided 1,100 passenger trips.

Passengers must live in Novato and be destined for a location also within the city of Novato. Only medical appointments are served. Dental,

chiropractic, and similar appointments are not eligible. Seniors must be 60 years or older. Health Express vans are wheelchair and walker accessible.

Novato is a community of about 48,000 in Marin County, California. It is the northernmost city in the county and has limited local transit service provided by Golden Gate Transit and Marin County Transit District. Development is low-density suburban. Seventeen percent of the population is age 60 or older.

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Oakmont Village Transit Service in Santa Rosa

The City of Santa Rosa operates transit service in a planned retirement community with support from the homeowner's association. Santa Rosa is the principal city of Sonoma County, located 50 miles north of San Francisco. The City, with a population of about 148,000, operates a 21-bus municipal transit system.

Oakmont Village is a planned retirement community built around two golf courses on land annexed to the City on the outskirts of Santa Rosa. Residents of the community approached the City with a request for transit service. Transit service to this low-density, affluent community on the edge of the transit service area would be unlikely to meet established performance objectives. However, the City agreed to operate transit service if the residents would subsidize the service. A partnership agreement was reached in 1999 between the City and the Oakmont Village Association (OVA). The City agreed to operate two weekday routes to circulate within the boundaries of Oakmont Village, and also to provide direct mid-day round trip service to nearby shopping centers. The mid-day shopping trips include a stop over, timed to coincide with the driver's lunch break, that gives riders time to do their shopping or errands before the bus returns to Oakmont Village. For this service the City uses one of its 30-foot low-floor buses.

OVA provides the City with a \$54,000 per year subsidy for the service using revenue from regular homeowners dues. The transit subsidy adds \$1 per month per resident to the dues. It covers about one-third of the total cost of operating the route. In exchange, Oakmont Village residents ride the route free of charge. There was some initial opposition within Oakmont Village to the concept of the transit subsidy. However, when the agreement was put to a ballot, it was approved by a wide margin.

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Rossmoor Community Transit Service

The adult community of Rossmoor in Walnut Creek, California, provides extensive transit and paratransit services for its residents. The services are financed by the residents through their monthly fees. Rossmoor consists of about 9,000 residents living in 6,700 units in a mix of multi-unit buildings and single-family houses. There are also extensive public facilities. At least one resident of each unit must be 55 years of age or older. Although Rossmoor is part of the city of Walnut Creek, it is largely isolated from the rest of the city.

The Golden Rain Foundation, the non-profit property manager for Rossmoor, began providing bus service in 1970 with four buses on four routes. A paratransit program began operating in 1997 with two new lift-equipped buses. There are now six routes plus dial-a-bus and paratransit provided with nine small buses, eight of which are lift-equipped. The routes operate from approximately 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The Dial-a-Bus service extends general public service to 6 a.m. in the morning and 10 p.m. at night and on Sunday. Destinations include recreational and service facilities within Rossmoor and a near-by retail and medical center where connections can be made to the public bus system. The system is fare-free and provides about 19,500 trips per month making it one of the largest providers of service to seniors and persons with disabilities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Although the operating cost of the transit system is paid entirely out of resident fees, the system has been able to obtain five small paratransit buses

through the federal Section 5310 program which funds vehicles for service to seniors and people with disabilities.

Web Resources

Basic statistics about Rossmoor's transit system are contained in MTC's *Social Services Transportation Inventory*, August 2002 which can be ordered from the MTC library. An ordering link is at <http://www.mtc.ca.gov/publications/fullrecordpubs.htm#ssti>.

The Rossmoor web site at <http://www.rossmoor.com/> includes bus schedules and information about the community.

Support by Local Businesses for the Independent Transportation Network

The Independent Transportation Network® (ITN) is a non-profit transportation service for seniors and people with visual impairments in Portland, Maine and vicinity. The program was developed with support from research grants, and is currently entirely community-based, operating without public subsidies. To achieve this objective, the ITN has developed a variety of methods for community support. Individuals support the program by volunteering as drivers, by becoming dues-paying members, by donating automobiles, by making contributions, and by hosting community teas. Riders are also a major source of financial support.

The program is entirely community-based, operating without public subsidies.

Part of the philosophy that led to creating the ITN is that older people who were used to driving, and used to the cost of driving, would be willing to pay to support transportation that offers them the dignity and independence of a private car. In accordance with this philosophy, the charge for the service is much higher than for typical public transportation. Riders pay by the mile or by the hour, and the average charge per trip is about \$7.

Businesses also support the program. Two forms of business support that are particularly innovative are the Ride and Shop™ and Healthy Miles™ programs. The two programs are similar, except that the first is for merchants and professional services and the second is for health care providers. In both programs, whenever an ITN member uses ITN to travel to a participating business, the business contributes \$1.50 toward the cost of transportation. To avoid excessive processing costs, the businesses pay annual dues and establish an account with ITN. The merchant or health care provider's account is debited whenever a trip is provided by ITN to their

business. The businesses receive regular statements showing the activity in their accounts.

Nineteen merchants and other businesses participate in Ride and Shop including grocery stores, a mall, a restaurant, a bank, arts groups, and lawyers specializing in elder law. Health care providers participating in Healthy Miles include eye doctors, audiologists, and podiatrists. The per trip support amount was chosen to be similar to a typical cost for parking validation. Businesses also support ITN by becoming members, by in-kind donations, and by sponsoring the program's newsletter.

With this combination of community resources, ITN was able to provide its members about 18,000 rides in 2002 with no public subsidy.

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Web resources

ITN's web site at <http://www.itninc.org> describes the full range of services provided.

A description of ITN is contained in the report, *Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors*, prepared by The Beverly Foundation with support by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, June 2001 (pages 77-82). The report is available at <http://www.seniordrivers.org/research/index.cfm>.

Foundation Support in Reno, Nevada

In 2001, the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), which operates public transportation in the Reno, Nevada urbanized area encouraged the local business community to establish a non-profit to assist with transportation challenges for seniors and persons with disabilities. Led by a local attorney, a group of citizens founded CitiCare, a non-profit corporation. CitiCare's mission is to create partnerships among government, private businesses, foundations, and individuals to generate funds to bridge the gap between the growing need for affordable transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities and the RTC's ability to fund it.

CitiCare is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, which can receive tax-deductible donations. The RTC provides administrative support and technical transportation expertise, so that all donations go directly to provide service. As of March 2003, CitiCare had received approximately \$50,000 in grants from four foundations, and had set a goal of raising over \$200,000 in the next twelve months. The funds raised by CitiCare will be used to provide rides, including those to medical appointments and other essential life activities, in conjunction with the RTC's CitiLift paratransit service.

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Chapter 7. Using Volunteers Effectively

Volunteer assistance can be an effective and efficient way of providing the high level of personalized care that many seniors require for transportation. Volunteers driving their own vehicles or driving agency-owned vehicles can combine transportation for older riders with assistance in and out of buildings and in conducting their business. This type of assistance is often referred to as escort service. Volunteers can also provide trips in rural areas that might be prohibitively expensive to provide with paid drivers. Challenges for volunteer programs include finding the right ways to make good use of volunteers, attracting volunteers, and keeping them involved. A number of programs illustrate some successful approaches to these challenges, including:

- Working within faith-based organizations;
- Having seniors themselves take responsibility for finding volunteers;
- Working through existing service organizations;
- Structuring volunteer opportunities to allow for group participation and limited time commitment;
- Regional coordination providing support for volunteer transportation;
- Coordinated aging and ADA paratransit services; and
- Combining volunteer transportation with case management services.

Oakland Faith in Motion Van Project

The Oakland “Faith in Motion” Van Project provides transportation support and “life enhancing” services for senior adults. The project is based on a four-tiered community partnership model. Eight religious congregations in Oakland provide the foundation of the community partnerships (Tier 1). Oakland non-profit organizations such as the Oakland Youth Chorus, San Francisco Foundation, and West Oakland Intergenerational Services (Tier 2), and senior centers and residences without transportation services (Tier 3) use the Van Project on a fee for service basis. Promotional partnerships with locally owned theaters, grocery stores, museums and restaurants (Tier 4) provide “life-enhancing” services to the van passengers. Any older adult or person with disabilities within a reasonable driving distance (Oakland and some places in Berkeley) can use the program, not just those associated with one of the congregations.

The Van Project provides support to about 160 older adults each week. Regularly scheduled trips occur on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday. These trips serve senior center activities (Wednesdays), the Oakland Museum (Sundays), a local food market that provides a discount to the Van Project passengers (Thursdays), and worship (synagogue on Saturdays and church on Sundays). Individual rides are available by appointment. The project provides pre-arranged transportation to medical and dental appointments on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. People with disabilities can also reserve a ride to the YMCA. Trips are provided to a cultural event of the passengers' collective choice once a month. Passengers must reserve rides several days ahead of time. The vans are also available for partner congregations to use for a fee.

All activities and most of the seniors are located around downtown Oakland, Lakeshore, and Adam's Point. This neighborhood is characterized by moderate-density housing development where apartment buildings are common. The area is relatively hilly, which is a potential mobility issue for older pedestrians. Commercial corridors within the area provide many important services. The Faith in Motion Van Project maintains its efficiency with this geographic focus. They plan to start a similar program "pod" focusing on East Oakland following this same model.

The eight congregations (various Christian denominations and Jewish) that are the foundation of the project pay \$1,000 each to join and \$250 annually. Two grants also finance the project: \$20,000 from the Y & S Soda Foundation and \$15,000 from the San Francisco Foundation. The project has two vans and a part-time staff. The project has hired a driver whose job is not just to drive the van but also to support the community-building aspect of the project. In a fund-raiser planned for May 2003, called the "Sacred Stroll," the member congregations planned to host tours of their buildings (which are mostly historic landmarks) supported by the characteristic music of each congregation. Plans called for the passengers to act as docents and for the vans to transport people from one congregation to the next. The fundraiser was planned to raise \$12,000.

The founders of the project intended it to be a community building service. Passengers get together for cultural and political activities. In conjunction with the transportation element, the project intends to provide various types of "life enhancing" training. These include training to be a senior advocate or a buddy to accompany others to medical appointments. In response to a shortage of people with the necessary class B license to drive one of these vans, the project will provide training to help people get a license to drive the vans. This way, participants will become qualified for jobs and can assist with the Van Project.

While many programs have problems with volunteer retention, the Faith in Motion Van Project does not.

The project also provides a feed-back loop for its own volunteer needs. While many programs of this sort have problems with volunteer retention, the Faith in Motion Van Project does not. The program sponsors attribute this to not overtaxing their volunteers. Project coordinators promise not to ask volunteers to do anything more than once per month. In addition, many volunteers attend the congregations regularly. When a volunteer is needed, someone attending the congregation for worship will be available. The Oakland Faith in Motion Van Project aims to build community, but building community is facilitated through an existing community.

Web resources

Recent articles about the Oakland Van Project can be found at http://www.fvpc.org/upcoming_events.htm ("The Oakland Van" by Catherine Coleman) and at <http://www.macarthurmetro.org/200204/news/1002> ("Faith Communities Van Rolls Around Oakland" by Catherine Coleman).

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Innovative Volunteer Recruitment at Riverside TRIP

The Transportation Reimbursement and Information Project (TRIP) in Riverside County has developed a number of innovative approaches to volunteer transportation. These include having riders recruit and pay their own drivers with later reimbursement by TRIP, recruiting through other organizations, partnerships with human service agencies, and providing insurance for volunteer vehicles. TRIP is operated by the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and People with Disabilities.

The philosophy behind TRIP is that people must take responsibility for the outcomes in their lives. Therefore, riders are asked to recruit their own drivers. TRIP staff coaches them in how to approach friends and neighbors and assures them that they are not asking for charity, since they can

reimburse the driver. TRIP has also developed audiotapes and videotapes that provide tips to its clients on how to solicit assistance from neighbors, friends, and other potential drivers. One of the problems of the elderly is isolation, which leads to giving up. Finding a driver encourages people to get to know their neighbors and reduces the feeling of dependency and victimization.

The volunteer drivers are reimbursed at a rate of \$.28 a mile for use of their personal vehicles. The reimbursement rate was set in 1993 based on the allowed IRS rate at that time. The ability to pay drivers may help the riders feel alright about asking for rides. However, according to the project's director, some drivers don't want the money so TRIP suggested that they contribute it to charity. The suggestion has been met with a lot of enthusiasm.

When TRIP started, riders were required to find their own drivers without TRIP's assistance. Otherwise, both the Board of Directors and Riverside County staff (who administer TRIP's main funding source) feared there could be liability claims against the agency and the County. Over time, they reconsidered. First, they were reassured by the experience of the national Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP), which insures its volunteer drivers. Second, they discovered that their own insurance underwriter would write the coverage for \$.50 per year per driver, for non-owned vehicles, in conjunction with the \$1 million liability policy TRIP carries (\$2 million aggregate). This insurance is "excess" insurance that covers liability that may exceed the coverage of volunteers' own insurance.

TRIP has learned that other organizations have received contradictory answers from their insurance carriers, denying coverage of volunteer activities. While the issue does not seem to be settled within the insurance industry, TRIP is willing to risk the uncertainty based upon its own continuing coverage of volunteer drivers.

Although 85% of TRIP clients are successful in recruiting a driver, TRIP staff has begun a Volunteer Driver Corps to help the remaining 15%. It does this by partnering with existing organizations to recruit reserve drivers from within those organizations. When an organization has developed a pool of at least six reserve drivers, TRIP performs a DMV check, adds them to its insurance, gives them an identification card and lapel pin, and refers riders to the organization as needed. Besides free publicity, the organizations are included in TRIP's grant proposals. As of June 2003, 17 organizations were participating in the Volunteer Driver Corps, including several senior centers, several community access (independent living) centers, several churches, Jewish Family Services, and both Riverside Transit Agency and the Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency. The Volunteer Driver Corps is also promoted

on Vital Connections, a web site operated by the Partnership that provides all kinds of information about aging and caring for seniors, as well as links to a wide variety of volunteer opportunities

The driving record of a new Volunteer Driver Corps driver is checked through the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Drivers can have no moving violations in the past three years. Out-of-state drivers are turned down until they register with the DMV. Drivers must also have automobile insurance. Since drivers often help their frail or disabled riders out of the house and into the vehicles, TRIP's liability insurance also covers falls. In addition, the riders must sign a waiver, releasing TRIP from liability.

Another feature of TRIP that contributes to its success is its close connections to other organizations. TRIP is not advertised. Instead, individuals are referred to TRIP by its 200 non-profit and governmental partners, such as the Department of Social Services, the Office on Aging, visiting nurses, the Multipurpose Senior Services Program, and Care Teams comprised of the District Attorney's office, police, licensing agencies, adult day care programs, and the Better Business Bureau. Therefore TRIP is only one part of a much larger network aimed at keeping seniors healthy and independent. In fact, TRIP is not considered a transportation program, but rather a social assistance program with an escort and transportation component. A key feature is the education and counseling provided by the staff.

The principal source of referrals is the Riverside County Office on Aging's Senior HelpLink. This is the local information and referral program connected to the 1-800-510-2020 telephone number that is advertised statewide. Senior HelpLink receives about 17,000 transportation-related calls a year. Of those, 187 new clients were enrolled in TRIP in FY 2001-02. The rest were counseled on community resources available for specific problems and given information on other transportation options. The HelpLink staff determine eligibility by questions such as whether the caller is unable to drive, needs assistance getting in and out of a vehicle, or has no family members to provide a ride. Potentially eligible callers are then sent an application, which is subsequently reviewed by an eligibility review committee. About one-third of the applicants are denied eligibility, because the committee determines that the individual can use other transportation options, such as Dial-a-Ride. TRIP is considered a service of last resort.

In fiscal year 2000-01, TRIP's annual transportation expenses were \$350,157. With this budget, TRIP served 537 people by providing 48,350 one-way trips at a cost of \$7.24 a trip. These trips were provided by over 1,000 volunteer drivers. TRIP is staffed by the Executive Director of the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living, an Administrative Coordinator, and a Clerical Assistant, who together spend 63 hours a week on TRIP

functions. TRIP contracts with an accountant and pays \$41,000 a year to Senior HelpLink to screen potential applicants. This amount funds 1.5 full-time equivalent Office on Aging employees.

In a 2001 survey of 149 riders, 94% reported that, before enrollment in TRIP, they had not been able to travel for medical purposes when necessary, and 93% said that they had been unable to get needed groceries. Before TRIP was available to them, 13% said they never left their residence, and 49% said they could travel only one or two times a month. After enrolling in TRIP, 96% reported an increase in their ability to travel. TRIP's data indicate that participants take an average of 7.5 trips per month.

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Web Resources

The Volunteer Driver Corps is described on the Vital Connections web site at <http://www.vitalco.net/become-a-driver-corps-volunteer.htm>.

The Partnership to Preserve Independent Living has a description of TRIP on its web site at <http://www.livingpartnership.org/trip.html>.

A more detailed description of TRIP is available in the report *Supplemental Transportation Programs for Seniors* prepared by the Beverly Foundation in 2001 and available on-line at <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/STP.pdf>.

Effective Use of Volunteers by Out and About Vista

The City of Vista, in northern San Diego County, has developed a volunteer transportation program for its older residents, that illustrates several effective techniques for attracting and retaining volunteers. The program is called Out and About Vista. It includes a mileage reimbursement component that is partly modeled on the Riverside TRIP program and van service operated by City staff.

For its volunteer driver/mileage reimbursement program, Vista reimburses volunteers at the approved IRS rate (currently \$.36 per mile) for a maximum of 150 miles per month. Many seniors usually secure the services of a friend or neighbor to drive them. However, the program staff has found that it can be hard for seniors to find volunteers, largely due to the fact that their neighbors are often unable to drive as well. People who call Out and About often have already tried without success to find someone to drive them. To address this issue, Out and About has created a Volunteer Driver Corps (modeled after Riverside's TRIP program), many of whose members are themselves older people. The most effective method for recruiting volunteers has been articles that appear in the local newspaper. The program staff issues press releases regularly and provides ideas for articles to encourage this press coverage. The City has also advertised in the local newspaper and the Pennysaver advertising circular, and recruited through mobile home parks where there are significant numbers of older people who already provide rides to neighbors.

To help make participation more attractive for the volunteers, Out and About Vista reimburses for mileage between the volunteer's home and the home of the person needing a ride, as well as for the mileage of the ride itself. This additional reimbursement helps address the fact that providing rides in a spread out community can involve substantial driving distances.

Volunteers decide the days, times of availability and distances they are willing to travel. The program recommends one-week advance notice for requesting volunteer driver services. The Out and About coordinator matches a volunteer driver with a senior according to request criteria. The coordinator does not give out the volunteer drivers' telephone numbers, but acts as a gate keeper to control the time demands placed on them. Volunteer drivers are issued the senior's phone number and important information. In some instances, volunteers develop special bonds with their clients, and release their phone number to their client to set up future trips without the services of the Out & About coordinator. Small client emergency cards are issued to drivers and are hole-punched to fit into the driver's existing handbook. The City also provides umbrella insurance coverage for the volunteer drivers. The drivers' insurance remains as primary coverage, but the City policy protects them against any claims that might exceed the limits of their own policies. The umbrella coverage is provided through a rider on the City's regular policy and costs less than \$1,000 per year.

For another part of the Out and About Vista program, the coordinator has arranged for participation by the local Golden K's (Senior Kiwanas). Out and About operates two 14-passenger lift-equipped shuttles that transport seniors to medical appointments and to several local shopping locations. For the shopping trips, the shuttles deliver the riders to the shopping area and wait

to take them home again. The Golden K's meet the shopping shuttle and assist the seniors with their shopping. Many of the seniors had to give up driving because of severe visual difficulties such as macular degeneration. These same vision problems make it hard for them to see prices and handle money, and leave them feeling vulnerable if they are left alone. Assisting them makes a relatively easy and rewarding group activity that can be accomplished during a typical lunch hour.

Out and About Vista began with funding from Aging and Independence Services of San Diego County, a grant from Tri-City Medical Center, and Community Development Block Grant funds from the City of Vista. The City also contributes in-kind services in the form of maintenance and fuel for the shopping shuttle van, use of office space and equipment, and administrative services such as processing the volunteer reimbursements. Until June 2003, Out and About was run by two part-time coordinators, but partially due to the end of funding from Aging and Independence Services, the program has decided to operate with only one coordinator.

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Web Resources

Out and About Vista is described at <http://www.ci.vista.ca.us/community/out-about.htm>.

Regional Coordination by Ride Connection in Portland, Oregon

The Ride Connection program in Portland, Oregon illustrates how a partnership between a regional coordinating organization and local providers can support volunteer transportation. Ride Connection is a not-for-profit corporation that coordinates transportation provided by community-based organizations in the four-county Portland metropolitan area, including Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah, and Washington Counties. Ride Connection was formed in 1988 (originally under the name Volunteer Transportation, Inc.) following a collaborative process involving a citizen committee and Tri-Met, the principal public transit operator in the region. The process

recognized that older people and people with disabilities had transportation needs that were not served by existing programs and determined that a volunteer program could meet those needs.

Transportation is provided by a network of over 30 partner agencies. About half of these organizations currently use volunteers to provide transportation either exclusively or together with paid drivers. These include religious and ethnic organizations, medical and senior centers, youth clubs, public agencies, and general social service organizations. Ride Connection coordinates funding for specialized transportation for the region, makes vehicles obtained through the federal Section 5310 program available to its partner agencies, provides centralized driver training and insurance, provides management support to smaller agencies, and assists with volunteer recruitment.

All these activities help make volunteer transportation viable in the long term as a meaningful component of specialized transportation in the region. Working through Ride Connection, Tri-Met has been willing to maintain a substantial financial contribution to volunteer transportation.

As an established regional organization, Ride Connection has the ability to recruit using methods that would be beyond the means of many of its smaller partner organizations.

Until recently, the partner organizations were entirely responsible for recruiting their own volunteers. Beginning several years ago, in response to requests from its partners, Ride Connection began recruiting directly and referring volunteers to appropriate organizations. As an established regional organization, Ride Connection has the ability to recruit using methods that would be beyond the means of many of its smaller partner organizations. To recruit volunteers, Ride Connection places notices in newspapers, arranges for public service radio announcements, lists opportunities on the national Volunteer Match web site, and makes presentations to interested groups.

Retirement organizations such as retired teachers, bus drivers, fire fighters, and police officers are sources of volunteer drivers. Ride Connection also works with Chambers of Commerce and small businesses whose employees may have some flexibility in their hours. Building and maintaining long term relationships with these groups is important.

In making presentations to groups, it is important to tailor the presentation to each group's interests and to tell personal stories about how transportation has affected people's lives. Ride Connection conducts customer surveys and gets permission from respondents to use the comments they make about what volunteer-provided transportation means to them.

In recruiting volunteers, Ride Connection is as clear as possible about the commitment involved, including training, overall time commitment, and

what to expect when providing rides. Even though this may slow down initial recruitment, it is important for maintaining satisfied, effective volunteers. Ride Connection recognizes that many volunteers today want short term activities, including assignments that are project oriented with a definite beginning and end. For volunteers who will be on-call drivers, Ride Connection recommends that they be clear on how much they are willing to do. Drivers need to know how to say no to a request and not feel guilty about it. Without this ability, volunteers are likely to drop out.

For all new volunteer drivers, Ride Connection conducts a screening interview, a criminal history check, and a road test. They also provide eight hours of classroom defensive driving, a DMV driver history check, and four hours of training on mobility awareness and assistance, and give drivers a small blood-borne pathogen kit. For volunteers who will be driving a Ride Connection vehicle, the training includes all of the above plus a vehicle operations and daily vehicle inspection training. Ride Connection recommends but does not require that volunteer drivers have first aid and CPR training.

Ride Connection recommends conducting meetings for volunteer drivers. Too-frequent meetings or required meetings would be another time commitment that would deter some volunteers. However voluntary meetings on a quarterly basis provide an opportunity to share issues, establish a group identity, and socialize. It is helpful if drivers have a space in the organization's building that is theirs, at least a bulletin board.

It is common for volunteers who drive their own vehicle to assist their riders in and out vehicles and buildings. Beyond that, some of Ride Connection's partner organizations have been able to mobilize volunteers to act specifically as escorts for frail riders being transported on a vehicle driven by someone else. For example if a vehicle is bringing more than one person to a destination, the escort may help one person into the building while the driver is operating the lift for another rider. The escort may also help obtaining directions from a rider without the driver needing to be distracted. Some organizations have volunteer couples, one of whom drives while the other acts as an escort. Offering this kind of joint activity can help with recruitment.

As of June 2003 Ride Connection and its partners had 405 volunteers and 243 paid drivers providing transportation to seniors and people with disabilities. In April and May 2003, 26 new volunteers were added to the program.

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Web Resources

Ride Connection's web site at <http://www.rideconnection.org/> describes the agency's mission and history, lists the partner organizations, and provides links to staff.

The Volunteer Match web site at <http://www.volunteermatch.org/> lists volunteer opportunities with over 25,000 organizations, including Ride Connection.

Coordinated ADA Paratransit and Aging Programs in Lane County, Oregon

Close cooperation makes it possible to use volunteers to provide a wide variety of services and to reduce the cost of ADA paratransit.

In Lane County, Oregon, the ADA paratransit program of Lane Transit District (LTD), and the Senior and Disabled Services (S&DS) program of the Council of Governments cooperate in their volunteer programs. Their experience illustrates how close cooperation makes it possible to use volunteers to provide a wide variety of services and to reduce the cost of ADA paratransit. Volunteers are recruited by LTD's paratransit contractor, by S&DS's Senior Outreach program, by the federally-funded Senior Companions program, and by community organizations.

Lane County is about 110 miles south of Portland, Oregon. It includes the metropolitan area of Eugene-Springfield, home of the University of Oregon, and extensive rural areas stretching 60 miles to the Oregon coast and some 90 miles east into the Cascade Mountains.

LTD's basic ADA paratransit program, called RideSource, only provides curb-to-curb service. Drivers do not assist riders from their homes to the curb or from the bus to their destinations. Riders who need personalized assistance are responsible for having their own assistant to help them. By

using volunteers, LTD is able to reduce the cost of providing ADA paratransit and also to maintain a supplemental program called RideSource Escort. RideSource Escort is a door-to-door service intended primarily for people still living in their own homes who need more help than curb-to-curb service provides. Service is to and from medical appointments only. Eligibility is determined by S&DS's Senior Outreach program.

In fiscal year 2000-01, volunteers provided 3,822 RideSource rides and 1,061 RideSource Escort rides. For about half of the rides they provide, the volunteers drive their own vehicles, and for the other half they drive the RideSource contractor's vehicles. The contractor's staff schedule and dispatch all of these volunteer rides. The volunteers are recruited by a coordinator who works for the contractor, which is organized as a non-profit corporation. The coordinator works with a variety of programs in the County to recruit the volunteers.

The volunteer programs also make it possible to provide transportation in areas not covered by the ADA paratransit program. These trips are in areas within the transit district (the Eugene-Springfield area) but beyond the ADA service area as well as in parts of Lane County beyond the transit district boundaries. In 2000-01 the volunteers provided 15,458 non-ADA rides in LTD's district and 7,858 out-of-district rides in rural areas. These non-ADA rides are all arranged by S&DS. However, since the RideSource contractor is already processing volunteer mileage reimbursement for the contractor-scheduled ADA and RideSource Escort rides, it is convenient to have them also process reimbursement for the rides arranged by S&DS.

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Web Resources

LTD's web site includes an accessibility page at <http://www.ltd.org/site-files/access/index.html> which describes RideSource, RideSource Escort and other programs.

Information about special transportation provided by Lane Council of Government's Senior & Disabled Services and LTD is provided at S&DS's web site at <http://www.sdslane.org/spectrans.html>.

Combining Volunteer Transportation with Case Management Services

The Community Services Agency (CSA) of Mountain View and Los Altos has a volunteer transportation program that supplements the agency's other services. CSA provides case management, community outreach and senior nutrition services to help seniors maintain their independence. Geriatric case managers provide in-home assessments, counseling and referrals to community resources. In addition, Community Outreach volunteers provide escorted transportation and shopping assistance. Of approximately 200 seniors who received case management services in fiscal year 2001-02, about 20 also received escorted transportation provided by volunteers. In fiscal year 2001-02 volunteers provided about 140 round trips.

As much as possible, CSA refers people to the public transportation provided by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), including VTA's ADA paratransit service operated by Outreach. However, in some cases the case managers determine that a person is too frail to use Outreach. For these people, CSA tries to arrange escorted transportation using volunteers. The volunteers normally provide rides using their own vehicles, mainly to medical appointments and grocery shopping. The volunteers also help with shopping and may stay with the client at the doctor's office. In a few cases, where a person uses a wheelchair and cannot transfer to a car seat, a volunteer may accompany a person on Outreach's ADA paratransit service. For the most part, however, given a choice of providing an escort on Outreach or providing an escorted ride with their own vehicle, volunteers prefer to use their own vehicle.

The most effective means of recruiting volunteers have been public service announcements placed in weekly community newspapers. The effectiveness of these announcements is increased by periodic feature articles about CSA's services. According to CSA staff, the key to keeping volunteers involved is making them feel a sense of partnership and connectedness with the agency by means of regular communication. Volunteers receive on-going support and education, for example through periodic updates with useful information about the signs and symptoms of aging. It is also important to avoid burn out by rotating assignments among the volunteers.

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Chapter 8. Increasing the Affordability and Availability of Taxicabs

Taxicabs are a widely available means of transportation that older people who no longer drive can use when there is no one available to provide a ride. However, taxicabs can be quite expensive, and wheelchair accessible taxicabs are rarely available. Taxicabs are specifically exempted from provisions in the Americans with Disabilities Act requiring accessible vehicles. Programs to increase the affordability and availability of taxicabs include discounted taxi rides and efforts to help or encourage taxi operators to obtain accessible vehicles.

Discounted Taxi Rides

Beginning in the 1970s many communities began offering discounted taxi rides to seniors and people with disabilities. After passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1991, many of these programs were discontinued or sharply curtailed. However many taxi discount programs do continue to operate, and a few have even started up or been expanded again in recent years. In most programs, riders buy books of scrip which can be used like money to pay for taxi rides. For example, the City of Richmond, California, sells books of scrip worth \$30 in taxi rides for \$10. The books contain scrip in denominations of \$1.00, \$.50 and \$.20. Each rider can purchase up to three books of scrip each month. The taxi companies return the scrip to the City for payment. Other cities in the Bay Area that use scrip include San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, Napa, and Vallejo.

Discounted taxi service is often very popular with riders. It is available 24 hours a day every day. Unlike most paratransit services it does not have to be arranged a day in advance, so it can be used for urgent, unanticipated trips. Passengers get a direct ride to their destination without detours to serve other passengers. Many seniors find taxi service more appealing than other types of paratransit because a taxi is similar to a private car.

From the point of view of cities, discounted taxi service can be very simple and flexible. It requires no purchase of vehicles. The cost of the program can be varied according to budgetary needs by changing limits on the value of trips that will be subsidized for each rider. Cities can also control cost by varying the effective discount, for example by raising or lowering the amount users pay for a book of scrip. As a result, it is possible to operate a taxi

discount program with a great range of available budgets. In the Bay Area, the effective discount ranges from 90% to 50%.

Some small cities have used creative means to reduce the administrative burden of a taxi discount program. For example, in Emeryville (population 6,815) riders receive books of vouchers at no charge. When taking a taxi, each voucher can be used to pay for up to \$5 on the taximeter. The riders are required to make a \$1 co-payment with each voucher used. This system reduces the City's administrative work, since there is no need to process user payments for the vouchers. In Albany (population 16,411) riders pay cash for their taxi rides and obtain a receipt. The riders bring or mail their receipts to the senior center and the City reimburses 80% of the cost of the rides taken. The City pays for about 30 taxi rides per month costing about \$400.

The City of Berkeley's taxi scrip program, which provides about 16,000 trips per year, illustrates another kind of flexibility that is possible with taxi discounts. The City sells \$10 books of scrip at prices ranging from a low of \$1 to a high of \$5 depending on the rider's income, and whether the books are part of a baseline allowance per rider or additional books above the baseline. The baseline allowance is set quarterly depending on the budget. Oakland, which provides about 22,000 taxi trips per year, uses a similar allocation system. A \$10 taxi scrip book is sold for \$3.00. If the rider needs additional books above the allocation there may be a charge of \$5.00.

A persistent concern with taxi discount programs in urban areas is the potential for fraud and abuse by taxi drivers and passengers. San Francisco, which has the largest taxi discount program in the Bay Area, and provided over 800,000 trips in fiscal year 2001-02, is confronting this problem. The potential for fraud is greater in San Francisco than other cities because riders are permitted to obtain as much scrip as they need and pay only 10% of the face value of the scrip. (These unusual features are necessary because San Francisco uses its taxi program as part of its ADA complementary paratransit service.) In order to combat unauthorized selling and transferring of taxi scrip, San Francisco is moving to an automated debit card system which will totally eliminate the need for cash payments and paper handling, and tie payment directly to taximeter readings.

Accessible Taxicabs in San Francisco

In San Francisco the taxi fleet includes wheelchair accessible vehicles which can be used by participants in the City's ADA paratransit program and by any member of the general public who needs accessibility features. These taxis are minivans equipped with a manual ramp that allows wheelchair

users to board without having to transfer from a wheelchair into a seat. There is space in the vehicle for two passengers in wheelchairs or five seated passengers.

San Francisco uses taxicabs as a major component of its ADA paratransit program. Paratransit taxi users call any of the thirteen participating taxi companies and pay using scrip which they buy at a 90% discount. Adding ramped vehicles to the taxi fleet provided another travel option for those paratransit users who previously could only use the City's separate lift van



George Draper

program. In addition, the cost to the City for a ramped taxi trip is much less than the cost of a lift van trip. The ramped taxis also increased the availability of accessible transportation for the general public.

The program began in 1994 as a pilot involving eight ramped minivans, half purchased by the City and half purchased by Yellow Cab Cooperative. The City-purchased vehicles were leased to

the taxicab operator through the City's paratransit broker based upon the results of a competitive bidding process, with the proceeds of the lease used to provide paratransit trips. In 2000, in order to provide an incentive for taxi companies to purchase additional ramped taxis, the City issued 75 taxi medallions that were restricted to ramped taxis.

Currently there are 22 City-owned ramped taxis leased to two of the thirteen taxi companies that participate in the paratransit taxi scrip program. The companies pay a minimum lease payment set by the City at \$625 per month. This level was set to be comparable to the cost to the taxi company of a typical sedan used in taxi service in San Francisco. The two companies that lease the city-owned vehicles and five other companies operate over 90 additional ramped taxis which they have purchased on their own. The total number of ramped taxis actually operating fluctuates and is not known exactly.

Under the terms of the lease agreement between the taxi companies and the City's paratransit broker, the City-owned ramped taxis must be inspected by the broker twice yearly. The inspections check that the vehicles are being properly maintained and that all accessibility related equipment is working. These inspections are in addition to the inspections by the Police Department that all taxis are subject to.

Under the City's taxi regulations, ramped taxi operators are required to:

- Complete all training required by the Municipal Railway's accessible services program. This training is provided by certified trainers who focus on passenger assistance techniques and disability sensitivity.
- Assist, if requested, a disabled or elderly passenger entering and exiting the ramped taxi and ensure that the passenger is properly secured; and
- Handle an average of three wheelchair service calls per shift if available from dispatch.

Additional rules cover response time and arranging back up service if the accessibility equipment is not working.

The vehicles bought by the City in its last purchase are 2002 Chevrolet Ventures with a lowered floor and side-loading ramps. The choice of vehicle was determined by the decision to purchase the vehicles through a statewide procurement process managed by Caltrans. The taxi company-owned ramped taxi fleet includes other vehicle models, some with rear-loading ramps.

In Fiscal Year 2002-03, ramped taxicabs provided 35,347 one-way trips to participants who use wheelchairs in San Francisco's ADA paratransit program.

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Web Resources

A description of San Francisco's paratransit program, including taxi scrip and ramped taxis can be found on the San Francisco Paratransit Broker's web site at <http://www.sfparatransit.com>.

San Francisco's taxicab regulations, including special provisions for ramped taxis can be found on the web site of the City's Taxicab Commission at http://www.sfgov.org/site/taxicommission_index.asp.

Descriptions of taxi-based programs in many other cities are contained in the Transit Cooperative Research Program's Report 75, *The Role of the Private for Hire Vehicle Industry in Public Transit*, which can be ordered or downloaded at <http://www.tcrponline.org>.

Chapter 9. Housing Accessibility Modifications

For some older people, a significant barrier to mobility can just be getting in and out of the house. Steps that were no problem can become a major obstacle with increasing age, fragility, and disability. Friends and family members can help, but sometimes only with considerable difficulty or risk of injury. Paratransit drivers can sometimes help with steps, but many paratransit operators strictly limit the amount of such assistance that can be provided.

One program that helps with home accessibility is the Housing Accessibility Modification (HAM) program operated by the Center for Independence of the Disabled (CID) in Belmont, California. The HAM program assists seniors and people with disabilities who need grab bars, hand rails, or ramps to make their homes safer and more accessible. An occupational therapist assesses each home to determine the modifications that are needed, which are then put in place by a staff of two full-time installers. The program has been operating for over 15 years and currently service about 300 people per year with about 450 modifications.

The most common modifications are grab bars and handrails. Ramps cost an average of \$1,500 to \$2,000 apiece, so the program is able to install only about seven to eight of these per year. No single modification is permitted to cost more than \$3,000. The cost to the individual is based on a sliding scale according to income and ability to pay, and can be as little as \$10.

CID's HAM program costs about \$120,000 per year using Community Development Block Grant funds from the County of San Mateo and the cities of South San Francisco, Daly City, San Mateo, San Carlos, Redwood City, and Menlo Park. The program is available to residents of these jurisdictions.

Other similar programs in the Bay Area include the Berkeley Home Repair Program and the Access Modifications program of the Berkeley Center for Independent Living. Many home repair programs provide a wide range of handyman services for seniors and low income people.

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Web Resource

The National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification at <http://www.homemods.org> has articles about current topics, links to home repair organizations, and links to a range of how-to and advocacy resources.

Chapter 10. Safe Driving

Outside of big cities the great majority of older people rely on driving for most of their travel. Research for MTC's Older Adults Transportation Study showed that, in the next 20 years, more and more older people will live in places where public transportation is very limited. As a result, maintaining the mobility of older people has to include ways to help older people drive safely as long as possible. Local efforts to promote older driver safety include programs to educate older people and their families about myths and realities concerning older drivers, recognizing the effects of aging on driving and compensating for them, how to determine when its time to curtail or stop one's driving, and information about alternatives to driving.

Older driver training curricula and materials have been developed by AARP, the American Automobile Association, and the National Safety Council. Courses based on these curricula are widely available. AAA produces a variety of public service brochures in a series called "Straight Talk for Mature Drivers." The AAA Foundation on Traffic Safety also offers a variety of free booklets:

- *How to Help an Older Driver* discusses how families and friends of older drivers can help them maintain their independence and mobility without sacrificing safety.
- *The Older and Wiser Driver* explains how to compensate for the effects of aging.
- *Drivers 55 Plus: Test Your Own Performance* is a questionnaire to test driving-related skills with suggested measures.
- *A Flexibility Fitness Training Program Package for Improving Older Driver Performance* outlines exercises that older drivers can perform at home.

AARP's Driver Safety Program (formerly known as "55 Alive") covers topics such as vision and hearing changes, effects of medication, and reaction time changes. AARP also produces an *Older Driver Skill Assessment and Resource Guide* to help with self-assessment and a *Community Transportation Resource Worksheet* to help identify alternatives to driving that people can use.

Around the country there are a number of initiatives to advance the state of the art in older driver safety. For example, the Tampa Bay Area Agency on Aging created a program in 1995 called *Getting in Gear*. It includes:

- Tests to measure physical and cognitive driving abilities.

- A portable computer test to measure useful field of view and visual training techniques to improve the field of view.
- A defensive driving course based on the National Safety Council curriculum.
- Case management services including counseling, rehabilitation, referral to alternative housing, access to memory clinics, medical care, occupational therapy, and adaptive equipment use.
- A Mobility Management service to help with self-assessment, analyzing the costs of continuing to operate a motor vehicle, and establishing other modes of transportation.

The New York State Office for the Aging has published a 56-page guide called *When You Are Concerned – A guide for families concerned about the safety of an aging driver*. It covers topics such as how to bring up the topic of unsafe driving, ways to keep an older person driving safely, examples of successful interventions to assist an unsafe driver, and community resources.

The American Society of Aging (ASA) has identified a need to improve existing older driver training programs. In a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), ASA has developed Internet-based health promotion materials to assist communities in targeting older drivers with messages about safe driving in later life. The program, called Driving Wellness After 60, includes a curriculum for training professionals and will discuss:

- How to counsel older adults and their families on older driving.
- How to locate resources for older drivers.
- Myths about older drivers.
- The real issues affecting older driver safety.
- How these can be addressed to maximize independence for older adults.

A toolkit will be available for holding classes or discussions with older drivers. The driver curriculum will focus on increasing awareness of the effects of aging and health on driving abilities, self-assessment, and steps that can be taken to maximize driving abilities, such as strength training, medication assessments, and driver rehabilitation courses. The curriculum will address the development of transportation plans, in which older drivers begin discussing transportation as another consideration for the future if and when they are no longer able to live completely independently. Driving

Wellness After 60 will be tested in the Fall of 2003 in Contra Costa County, with funding from the East Bay Community Foundation.

Web Resources

The New York State Guide *When You Are Concerned - A guide for families concerned about the safety of an aging driver* is available at <http://www.aging.state.ny.us/caring/concerned/handbook.pdf>.

Tampa Bay's *Getting in Gear* program is described at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/outreach/safedige/summer2000/sum00-1.html>.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's publications can be ordered for free at <http://www.aaafoundation.org/products/index.cfm>.

An on-line called booklet *Driving Safety While Aging Gracefully* outlines the physical changes associated with aging, as well as tips on coping with them so that older drivers can remain safe drivers. It was developed by the USAA Educational Foundation, AARP, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It is available at [http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/Driving Safely Aging Web](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/olddrive/Driving%20Safely%20Aging%20Web).

AARP's Older driver publications are available at <http://www.aarp.org/drive/resources.html>.

ASA's *Driving Wellness After 60* materials will be available at <http://www.asaging.org/cdc>.